

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	50321	Agenda Number	3.
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Meeting Date:	10/1/2015	Department:	Austin Energy
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Subject

Authorize negotiation and execution of a 60-month lease renewal agreement with SWC Research & Ohlen, LP, for approximately 4,597 square feet of retail space located at 8716 Research Boulevard for the continued operation of an Austin Energy Customer Service Center, in an amount not to exceed \$688,890 (District 7).

Amount and Source of Funding

Funding in the amount of \$55,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of Austin Energy. Funding for the remainder of the agreement is contingent upon available funds in future budgets.

Fiscal Note

There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	
For More Information:	Jeff Vice, Director, Local Government Issues (512) 322-6087; Elaine Kelly-Diaz, VP, Customer Account Management (512) 322-6667; Vince McGlone, Facilities Management (512) 322-6420.
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	September 21, 2015 – Unanimously approved by the Electric Utility Commission on a vote of 11-0.
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

The proposed lease renewal agreement is for approximately 4,597 square feet of retail space at 8716 Research Blvd., near Ohlen Road, in Council District 7. This space accommodates an Austin Energy Walk-in Customer Service Center designed to assist new and existing utility customers with services related to obtaining or maintaining City of Austin utilities including collecting payments for Austin Energy, Austin Water Utility, Austin Resource Recovery and other utility-related fees.

This North Austin center includes office space allowing private consultation with customers, if requested, and computer stations for customers to learn how to process payment transactions online. It also includes a classroom designed for customers to receive education about conservation programs and the Customer Assistance Program, or for bill dispute hearings. It is utilized for meetings with Austin Energy's Customer Care Partners including Any Baby Can, Capital Idea, Services for the Elderly, Travis County and others, who work together to provide services for utility customers. In addition, this center includes an area for display of English and Spanish language materials about

conservation, cost saving measures and services offered by City utilities, and a convenient drop box for customers to make payments during and after normal hours of operation.

The center opened in May 2011 and, as of August 2015, completed 321,140 transactions. It houses seven employees—a manager, a Customer Solutions Coordinator, three Customer Service Representatives Senior and two Customer Service Representatives.

Austin Energy operates two walk-in customer service facilities—one described in this document and one in East Austin at the Rosewood-Zaragosa Center located at 2800 Webberville Road, in Council District 1. Both centers are designed to assist customers with: initiation of new services, service order requests, research and analysis of utility accounts, payment arrangement set up and agency assistance for those who qualify for the Customer Assistance Program.